



*April 2011*

## *Educational Opportunities*

### **GEEO Summer Travel Programs for Educators**

Global Exploration for Educators Organization (GEEO) is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that runs summer professional development travel programs designed for teachers.

GEEO is offering 13 different travel programs for the summer of 2011: India/Nepal, China, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey/Syria/Jordan/Egypt, South Africa/Mozambique/Zimbabwe/Botswana, Morocco, Argentina/Uruguay/Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Costa Rica and Guatemala/Belize/Mexico.

Educators have the option to earn graduate school credit (3 credits through Indiana University) and professional development credit while seeing the world. The trips are 8 to 23 days in length and are designed and discounted to be interesting and affordable for teachers. GEEO also advises teachers on how to find funding to subsidize the cost of the trips. GEEO provides teachers educational materials and the structure to help them bring their experiences into the classroom. The trips are open to all nationalities of K-12 and University educators and administrators, as well as retired educators. Educators are also permitted to bring along a non-educator guest.

Detailed information about each trip, including itineraries, costs, travel dates, and more can be found at [www.geeo.org](http://www.geeo.org). GEEO can also be reached seven days a week, toll free at [1-877-600-0105](tel:1-877-600-0105) between 9:00 AM-9:00 PM EST. To sign-up for GEEO's listserv, please send an e-mail to [listserv@geeo.org](mailto:listserv@geeo.org) with the subject line "subscribe." To follow GEEO on facebook click [here](#) and then click the "like" button.

## **MontCAS Item Review Panel**

This is a great opportunity for educators to be a part of the process and really understand MontCAS; also great professional development.

### **Item Review Panels**

Helena, April 19-20, 2011. We need to complete the following panels:

#### **Reading**

- Grades 3-4: need 2 panelists
- Grades 5-6: need 1 panelist
- Grade 10: need 1 panelist

#### **Math**

- Grades 3-4: need 1 panelist
- Grades 5-6: need 2 panelists
- Grades 7-8: need 3 panelists
- Grade 10: need 2 panelists

#### **Science**

- Grade 4: need 2 panelists
- Grade 8: need 4 panelists
- Grade 10: need 4 panelists

#### **Logistical Information**

- Training is included at each session.
- Lodging is provided for participants living 90 miles or more from Helena. In addition, mileage, meals not provided during the sessions, and substitute pay are reimbursed. Renewal units are also available.
- Registration is online at the following link:

<http://iservices.measuredprogress.org/Default.asp?ProgramID=11&submit1=Enter>

## Communication Arts

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### Common Core State Standards

Please view the March 10, 2011 presentation that provides an update on the Common Core State Standard Initiative in Montana. It can be viewed:

<http://connect.opi.mt.gov/p32776497/>

### Professional Development Opportunities

The Montana Writing Project wishes to announce that their institute, *Worlds Apart but Not Strangers: Holocaust Education and Indian Education for All*, is running from July 17-July 22, 2011.

One of five satellite seminars around the country sponsored by the Holocaust Memorial Library and the National Writing Project, this institute is designed for individuals who currently teach or are interested in teaching the Nazi Holocaust and would like to discover ways to link Holocaust education and Indian Education for All. Relevant to teachers in public or private schools, grades 4-12 as well as college and university faculty, the purpose of the course is to provide novice and experienced teachers with knowledge, pedagogy and attitudes about Holocaust education and Indian Education for All, using literacy, and especially writing, as tools to drive inquiry. The institute will focus on past history, including the Nazi Holocaust and the impact of U.S. policies on Native peoples of our nation. Our lens will then turn to the present, as we consider the roles (target, perpetrator, ally, bystander) people choose in their daily interactions with each other as well as the stereotypes and prejudice affecting our schools and our communities today. The DVD *Not in Our Town* ends with the narrator's observation, "Today we can say not in our town, but tomorrow we might be able to say not in our country." This satellite seminar aims to help teachers move one step closer to that reality.

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There is more information online at [http://www.cas.umt.edu/english/mwp/worlds\\_apart.cfm](http://www.cas.umt.edu/english/mwp/worlds_apart.cfm). You can also contact MWP at 243-4680 or via e-mail at [mwp@umontana.edu](mailto:mwp@umontana.edu). Interested people should apply or indicate a commitment by April 1<sup>st</sup> if you plan to participate in this incredible opportunity.

## **Native Voices: Montana Writing Project Satellite Institute**

June 20-July 8

Montana Writing Project is delighted to partner with Salish Kootenai College to offer *Native Voices*, a Montana Writing Project satellite institute that is a three-week immersion course in Native literature. It offers participants an equal balance between becoming acquainted with a long history and the contemporary reality of Native use of narrative and exposition. Over the course of the program, participants will be provided ample opportunities to do writing on their own, as well as the opportunity to produce and present an inquiry demonstration lesson that develops out of an investigation into teaching/learning issues concerning American Indians today. The institute will be held on the Salish Kootenai College in Pablo, and runs from June 30-July 8. The cost is \$125. Seven graduate credits from the University of Montana, valued at more than \$2,000, are available for a recording fee of \$135. Applications are available online at: <http://www.cas.umt.edu/english/mwp/documents/NativeVoicesApplication2011.pdf>. For more information, call (406) 243-4680 or e-mail [mwp@umontana.edu](mailto:mwp@umontana.edu). The application deadline is May 1, 2011.

## ***Early Grades***

Terry Barclay, Early Grades Curriculum Specialist  
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## **Common Core State Standards Initiative**

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has released a joint statement with the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in



State Departments of Education on the Common Core State Standards Initiative.  
The joint statement can be accessed through the NAEYC Web site:

<http://www.naeyc.org/ecp/resources>

## **Week of the Young Child: April 10-16, 2011 Early Years Are Learning Years®**

Week of the Young Child is held each year to honor young children and thank teachers and all those who make a difference in young children's lives. The theme for WOYC 2011 is *Early Years Are Learning Years.®*

The NAEYC encourages state and local Affiliates, early childhood programs, and organizations who work on behalf of young children to plan WOYC events that will bring your community together. For more information on how to plan an event, go to: <http://www.naeyc.org/woyc>

## **Hopa Mountain Seeks an Illustrator for a Children's Book**

**Hopa Mountain** (a Montana organization committed to rural and tribal citizen leaders who are working to improve education, ecological health, and economic development) is seeking submissions from artists interested in illustrating a children's book. The book will be between 18 and 30 pages. It is an early science book that focuses on the concept of "what is alive?" and follows a little boy and his big sister as they spend a day exploring together.

To submit a sample illustration, please scan and send a **one-page** sample of your work to [info@hopamountain.org](mailto:info@hopamountain.org) by April 15.

If you know of someone else who may be interested in submitting a sample illustration, please feel free to pass this message along. For further information, call Hopa Mountain at (406) 586-2455.

## **Grant Opportunity**

## Lego Children's Fund

The LEGO Children's Fund will provide quarterly grants for programs, either in part or in total, with a special interest paid to collaborative efforts and in providing matching funds to leverage new dollars into the receiving organization. They will give priority consideration to programs that both meet the organization's goals and are supported in volunteer time and effort by our employees. Lego Children's Fund supports early childhood education and development that is directly related to creativity. Application deadline: April 15, 2011. For further information regarding the grant opportunity, go to: <http://www.legochildrensfund.org/Guidelines.html>

## *Library-Information Literacy*

Colet Bartow, Library-Information Literacy Curriculum Specialist  
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## NCCE Teacher-Librarian Summit 2011

Please visit the Northwest Council for Computer Education (NCCE) Teacher-Librarian Summit wiki for video recordings of the entire Summit, all handouts and materials <http://2011tl.ncceconnect.org>

## Library of Congress – Teaching with Primary Sources Workshops, July 2011

There will be two trainings held in Montana in July/August for teachers and teacher-librarians who want to learn how to use the primary sources available from the Library of Congress. This highly engaging and highly relevant opportunity will be delivered through a partnership of the Library of Congress and the Northwest Council for Computer Education (NCCE). Please watch this newsletter for workshop details that will be available in May.

Visit: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/finding.html> for access to the Teaching with Primary Sources program.

## Become an Advocate for Libraries

Teens can win up to \$3,000 for their public or school library through a video contest



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launched by the American Library Association (ALA). The contest encourages teens aged 13 to 18 to create original videos on the theme Why I Need My Library (now more than ever). To participate in the contest, teens need to submit one- to three-minute videos on YouTube. The videos can be live action, animation, machinima or a combination of techniques, and teens can work in groups of up to six. The contest's Web site includes a list of tips and resources on making a video as well as the judging criteria. **Deadline:** Upload videos to YouTube by midnight, April 18, 2011: [Click Here for More Information](#)

## Promote the Role of Teacher-Librarians

The **Follett Software Company** has issued its **\$100K Follett Challenge** to find the best innovations in school libraries. Recognizing the strong link between library programs and student success, this contest advocates for the role librarians play as champions in school programs that drive student achievement. Six winning libraries will be rewarded with the cash equivalent of products and services from Follett. Five prizes, including a \$35,000 first-place prize, will be awarded by a panel of judges. A sixth \$10,000 prize will be awarded based on online voting for the best video. The application consists of a detailed program description, a written endorsement of support from the school's administration and a three- to five-minute video as a creative representation of the program's impact. **Deadlines:** Entries due by June 1, 2011; voting begins June 23, 2011 and ends September 2, 2011: [Click Here for More Information](#)

## Treasure Hunt for the Treasure State

The Montana State Library is pleased to announce that they will host a statewide National Library Week online scavenger hunt. National Library Week will be held April 10 – 16, 2011.

The scavenger hunt, called Treasure Hunt for the Treasure State, is designed to increase use of the statewide databases. There will be four categories of participation: elementary, middle school, high school, and adult public. Two prizes will be available in each category of participation. Because we assumed elementary classes would work on this as a class, we are providing two pizza parties for the winning classes. In the remaining categories of participation, two iPods will be awarded in each category for a total of six iPods distributed.

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Every day, the State Library will post new clues for which people must access the Gale databases to find the answers. Players must submit their answers with the database in which they found the answer.

Your library's participation in this statewide online event would be greatly appreciated. The state library is working hard to make this as easy for libraries to participate as possible. A host of materials to promote the event, including posters, Web buttons, bookmarks, table toppers, customizable newspaper ads, and more, are available for download here:

[http://msl.mt.gov/WhatsYourStory/Campaigns/Special\\_Projects/Treasure\\_Hunt/default.asp](http://msl.mt.gov/WhatsYourStory/Campaigns/Special_Projects/Treasure_Hunt/default.asp). Additionally, there will be press release templates available that promote the event and distribute the clues for which you will only have to personalize for your library.

Again, the state library hopes that you will participate in this event and use it as an opportunity to encourage your patrons to try using the databases – either at their home or in your library. This project was initially launched last year and it was a huge success. Participants from all over Montana at every age level participated! A lot was learned from last year so the hope is that this year will be even bigger and better. Please plan to promote this event locally

If you have questions about this event, please do not hesitate to contact:

Sara J. Groves  
Marketing and Communications Coordinator  
Montana State Library  
PO Box 201800  
Helena, MT 59620-1800  
Telephone: (406) 444-5357  
<http://msl.mt.gov>  
<http://ready2readmontana.org>

## Mathematics

Jean Howard, Mathematics Curriculum Specialist  
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**The Montana Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Regional Coordinators and Regional Service Area Directors are putting together a Directory of Professional Development Providers.** Do you provide professional development (training) for adults? Are you interested in offering your





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services in your region or across the state of Montana? This directory will provide the Coordinators/Directors with information about professional development providers in Montana (others outside Montana are also welcome to apply), your areas of interest, and how to contact you. This Directory will be available for Coordinators/Directors when they are asked about persons who can provide PD for on-site, regional, or statewide trainings. Your information will be confidential and used by the CSPD Coordinators and the RSA Directors for each region. If you are interested, **click on the following link** to fill out the [Directory of Professional Development Providers](#) **PREPARATION** You will be asked to provide a short biography as well as names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of two references. The form will take approximately 10 minutes to complete depending on the variety of training you are able to offer. You will need to complete the form in **one sitting**, as you cannot come back and finish it later.

Questions can be directed to Nancy Marks at [wmcspd@gmail.com](mailto:wmcspd@gmail.com) or (406)728-2400 ext 1088

## CCSS

Common Core State Standards and Montana Standards Analysis Report was presented to the Montana Board of Public Education, February 17, 2011. The report is now available on the Office of Public Instruction Web page. [Page including CCSS Analysis Report](#) It includes a summary of the results from three separate analyses; an out-of-state content experts' comparison of grade level Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Montana Essential Learning Expectations (ELE); a CCSS and Montana ELE match using the Achieve Gap Analysis Tool; and the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum.

In February and March, educators from across the state gathered to examine the CCSS and embed Indian Education in a purposeful manner. The selected standards provide the most effective integration of mathematics and Montana American Indians. If you are interested in reviewing this work, please contact Kris Goyins, [kgoyins@mt.gov](mailto:kgoyins@mt.gov) or Jean Howard, [jhoward@mt.gov](mailto:jhoward@mt.gov)

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An updated online presentation about the Common Core State Standards can be found on: [Page including CCSS presentation](#)

## **AMAZING OPPORTUNITIES TouchMath Teacher Grant**

Tell how you help your kids interact with math in a hands-on way and you could win \$200 and a Flip Video camera, plus bonus prizes like an iPad or TouchMath gift certificates. Best of all, the application process takes under five minutes—so you can do it while your students are at lunch. The deadline is approaching so no procrastinating!

→ **Apply now.**

<http://www.weareteachers.com/ideas/partnerask?grantId=56>

## **Summer Internships**

The McLaughlin Research Institute in Great Falls has summer internships for high school students and teachers [McLaughlin Research Internships](#). Please send applications asap to McLaughlin Research Institute, 1520 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South, Great Falls, MT 59405 or phone Jill O'Moore for more information at 406-454-6044

## **NCTM institutes**

**Infusing the Classroom with Reasoning and Sense Making**, an innovative event designed to give high school teachers strategies for creating a high school classroom rich in reasoning and sense making in Orlando, July 28–30, 2011-- more information available at: [www.nctm.org/reasoning](http://www.nctm.org/reasoning).

Another special NCTM institute for teachers in grades 3-8 **Algebra Readiness for Every Student** will start in Baltimore, August 9-12 and continue online throughout the year.

## Summer Math Institute

Information about the Park City Math Institute for secondary teachers that will be held this summer can be found at [mathforum.org/pcmi/hstp/](http://mathforum.org/pcmi/hstp/). Applications are at: [pcmi.ias.edu/application-sstp/](http://pcmi.ias.edu/application-sstp/). It is a great way to spend three weeks, learn math and think about teaching. **If you are accepted, everything is paid!**

## The 2011 STEM conference in Montana

Click on the link to find a statewide Montana Learning Center STEM Conference opportunity. Specific program details including the Qwest Leadership Science and Math Teachers giving presentations may be viewed at: [www.montanalearning.org](http://www.montanalearning.org).

## Homework Helper

The National Education Foundation is offering a Math Homework Helper Grant to the first 900 school districts that apply and qualify for this grant. **Free with no strings attached** for school districts with more than 35 percent of students who are in the free/reduced lunch program. The due date for the application is March 31, 2011 and it will take about three minutes to complete.

Math Homework Helper is a Web-based program that has links connecting to your specific math textbooks that you are using at your schools from grades 7th through 12th. It is accessible 24 hours a day for students online providing them with mathematical guidelines, hints, as well as videos regarding each subject matter or corresponding chapters in the book.

**For an application:** [www.cyberlearning.org/mathgrant/](http://www.cyberlearning.org/mathgrant/)

**For a demonstration:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0Ozvgt1MEE>

## 2011 NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL FINANCIAL CAPABILITY CHALLENGE Toolkit

The competition is over for this year. However, the [Financial Education Toolkit](#) with lesson plans that teacher can use anytime to help students learn about saving, budgeting, investing, and other important skills critical to building a strong financial future. The toolkit covers five core competencies of financial education: earning, spending, saving, borrowing, and protecting against risk. It includes a collection of lesson plans from the Federal Reserve, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and nonprofit organizations that are designed to help teach students important financial skills, such as developing a personal spending plan, balancing checking and savings accounts, understanding the cost benefits of buying insurance, using credit wisely, minimizing exposure to identity theft, and making smart investments in their future through education.

## **Mu Alpha Theta Honors and Encourages Student Math Success**

In 1954 Mu Alpha Theta Math Clubs offer students the opportunity to share time with other like-minded students. Many chapters enjoy math competitions; Mu Alpha Theta offers two free, three-test contests during the year: the Log 1 Contest, and the Rocket City Math League. Students take tests at their own school at a time convenient for their club. Last year over 6,000 students competed for prizes, trophies, plaques, and certificates of merit. Since 1968, Mu Alpha Theta has offered students a chance to travel each summer to a different location to attend the organization's National Convention. This past summer, over 680 students and teachers attended the event in Washington, D.C. Students had the opportunity to try some of the 30 different topic tests offered -- from Equations and Inequalities to Advanced Calculus and Number Theory. For those not interested in math contests, Mu Alpha Theta offers much more. This past year, Mu Alpha Theta and its Educational Foundation awarded \$49,000 in scholarships, \$16,000 in grants to students wishing to do mathematical research or attend a college math program during the summer and over \$48,000 in prizes and cash awards to outstanding students, teachers, and clubs. Find out more about Mu Alpha Theta and how schools can get involved, and explore a wide range of educational support materials and information at: [www.mualphatheta.org](http://www.mualphatheta.org).

## **Writing About Anxiety Helps Students Ace Exams**

Sian Beilock, lead author of a new study that recently appeared in the journal Science, says that writing about test-related worries for ten minutes immediately before taking an exam is an effective way to improve test scores in classroom settings. "By writing down one's negative thoughts, students may come to realize that the situation is not as bad as they thought or that they are prepared to take it on," said Beilock, an associate professor of Psychology at the University of Chicago.

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"As a result, they worry less during the test." Her study, "Writing about Testing Worries Boosts Exam Performance in the Classroom," was funded by the National Science Foundation's Directorate for Education and Human Resources. Students who get particularly anxious about test taking saw their scores on high stakes exams go up nearly one grade point after they wrote about why they feared the test's outcome. In fact, highly anxious students who had the opportunity to write down their thoughts before taking a research study, administered math test received an average grade of B+. Highly anxious students who didn't write down their thoughts received an average grade of B-. The researchers concluded that the writing exercise provided students an opportunity to unload their anxieties before taking the test and thereby freed up brainpower needed to perform successfully -- brainpower that is normally occupied by testing worries.

## **Global Study Analyzes Parents' Math Attitudes, Capabilities, and Students' Active Engagement in Math-Related Learning**

Raytheon Company has unveiled new research exploring parental attitudes toward math, parents' perceived math capabilities, and the level of active engagement in math-related learning among 10-14 year olds across the United States, England, and Singapore: "[A Cross-Country Exploration of Math-Related Learning in the United States, England, and Singapore: Parent Perceptions and Practices Regarding Math Education During the Middle School Years.](#)"

## **Science**

Kristen Crawford, Science Curriculum Specialist  
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## **Turn your middle school students into scientific sleuths through an exciting online mystery! The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the Smithsonian Institution launch "Vanished" on April 4.**

Middle schoolers across the country will have the chance to become detectives in two weeks. Scientific detectives, that is. On April 4, developers at MIT and scientists at the Smithsonian Institution will launch a Web site called Vanished that will enable middle schoolers to help solve a mystery surrounding an environmental disaster. The students will be asked to collect data, conduct research, consult peers, and draw conclusions as they try to figure out what happened, and why.





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Every week for eight weeks, they will be given another clue and access to new games that will help them achieve an understanding of scientific concepts they will need to solve the mystery.

"You'll think of this like a television series like 'Lost.' There's a big reveal every week, and everyone's jumping on the forum as soon as the episode is over and typing and trying to figure out what actually happened, looking for clues," said Caitlin Feeley, a project manager who has been working on the Web site for the past two years.

Registration for the game will open March 21 at the Web site:

<http://vanished.mit.edu/>

Information provided in an article by Alli Knothe, Boston Globe Correspondent  
See the full story about "Vanished" by visiting the following Web site:

[http://www.boston.com/business/techn...ic\\_sleuths/](http://www.boston.com/business/techn...ic_sleuths/)

## **Free Middle School Science Resources**

The American Chemical Society (ACS) has just released a new free middle school science resource at <http://middleschoolchemistry.com>. It is a completely free source of activity-based lesson plans for teaching basic chemistry concepts at the middle school level. The lessons cover all the main concepts in middle school chemistry so any part of a lesson or the entire lesson can be used on its own or in conjunction with the curriculum the teacher is already using. Each lesson also contains integrated animations and video that a teacher can use to help explain student observations on the molecular level. Online professional development will also be available to introduce and familiarize teachers with the demonstrations, activities, and chemistry content in the site.

## **Rubik's Cube Classroom STEM Lessons**

On the heels of President Obama's State of the Union Address calling for a greater classroom focus on science, technology, engineering, and math, teachers nationwide now have access to a new resource: STEM lessons built around the Rubik's Cube. The You CAN Do The Rubik's Cube community initiative, currently in its second full school year, has developed STEM lessons in conjunction with the Common Core State Standards, National Standards, and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, providing the lessons to teachers for free via download at [www.YouCanDoTheCube.com](http://www.YouCanDoTheCube.com). The STEM lessons provided by You CAN Do The





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Rubik's Cube program were developed for elementary, middle, and high school classrooms and aim to help teachers foster STEM skills.

One of the lessons focuses on three-dimensional thinking and representation. The goal is to have students know orthographic projection -- design representation based on 3-dimensional projections of a cube -- and how to use them to describe and design something that can be manufactured. Students are introduced to multi-view sketches that will be used by others to produce a final product. "All scientific progress occurs in incremental steps, with one discovery building upon another. Learning to solve the Rubik's Cube is a good way to understand how scientific process occurs," said Rohrig. Since its release in 1980, the Rubik's Cube has since found its way into over 350 million homes worldwide and has continued to fascinate, bewilder, and challenge millions of people.

## **Ecology Project International- Scholarships Available!**

Are any of your students interested in spending time this summer in a real, live ecosystem? Are you interested in a meaningful field experience in our very own Yellowstone Park? Montana is fortunate to be the home base of Ecology Project International, an organization dedicated to developing field science partnerships between local experts and high school students in order to address critical conservation issues worldwide. Generous scholarships are available for Montana students across the state, and teachers may even be able to attend a summer experience for free! Check out their Web site for more information:

[Ecology Project International-Montana](http://www.ecologyproject.org/promo/yellowstone_wildlife_ecology_program)

[http://www.ecologyproject.org/promo/yellowstone\\_wildlife\\_ecology\\_program](http://www.ecologyproject.org/promo/yellowstone_wildlife_ecology_program)

## **Environmental Discovery Day 2011**

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality, the Interagency Committee for Change by Women's "Take Your Sons and Daughters to Work Day" and the State Arbor Day Celebration invites you to join them for this year's Environmental Discovery Day on Thursday, April 28, in Helena. Please go to the following link for more information. [Environmental Discovery Day 2011](#)

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## **Launch of Montana OPI on iTunes U**

Now educators and students can enjoy free content from Montana OPI on iTunes U, a dedicated area within the iTunes Store. Universities, colleges, schools, museums, and many other educational and cultural institutions from around the world have made content available at iTunes U. Montana joins a growing number of states that are taking advantage of iTunes U to allow access to educational content free of charge, 24 hours a day. Through Montana OPI on iTunes U, OPI is able to offer professional development content, instructional videos and classroom activities to teachers, students and the public.

For more information and to access Montana OPI on iTunes U, please go to our:

[iTunes resource page](#)

<http://opi.mt.gov/Resources/iTunes>